1:Nimuendajú E-5 (1941-1942) 1952
SQ20 Tucuna SQ20

For the deer that invade the plantations, pitfalls (a:'maɲ°) are dug to the depth of a meter and a half, a sharpened paxiuba stake being set vertically at the bottom. In a pitfall that I saw, a dog had died, and a few days later an alligator also fell into it. 224

Gathering

The gathering of wild fruits and the capture of animals that cannot properly be included under hunting are still carried on by both sexes; by men when the opportunity presents itself and by women on trips made for the purpose. 222 [462]

There are many varieties of edible wild fruits, although most have no economic importance, being no more than mere tidbits, like the pods of the *arara tucupy*, the seeds of which are covered with a thin layer of thick, sweet liquid. The only fruits of real economic importance are those of the four palms, burity (*Mauritia vinifera*), *bacabeira* (*Oenocarpus bacaba*), *patauá* (*Oenocarpus patauá*), and açahy (*Euterpe* sp.). All four species are common in the jungles of the Tukuna. During the period of gathering one always sees large earthenware vessels containing burity fruits soaked in a solution to make the rinds come off more easily, and the Indians constantly help themselves. The fruits of these four palms are then macerated in tepid water and a fatty drink is prepared by a process common among the Neobrazilians as well, the separation of the pulp from the stones by treading. The liquid is passed through a very fine sieve (va'iri-činɨ-ɨ°ñ, from va'ira, açahy). A sufficient quantity is then prepared so that the neighbors may be invited to drink also. The gathering of the fruits and the preparation of the beverage are feminine tasks. 222 824 262 [415] 272 [171] [462]

The Tukuna are acquainted with the Brazil nut, or niggertoe, *castanha do Pará* (*Bertholletia excelsa*), but they eat only the kernels without preparing from them either milk or oil. Nino, an Indian of Igarapé da Rita, had planted near his house about ten such saplings, which were then bearing fruit. 262 [245]

The Tukuna will not eat toads, though they do not reject various species of frogs; they also eat beetle larvae, which are found in burity palms, and the queens of *saúva* ants (i.g., *içú; Atta cephalotes*) when they are swarming. Of the various kinds of honey the most appreciated is that of the wild bee, jandaíra. Bees are not raised at home. [263]

Food

The most common food is fish, either boiled or freshly smoked and eaten with farinha (formerly with beijús). Seasoning is obtained by thrusting the fingertip into a small dish with crushed salt and pepper and then licking it. At present, the salt is bought from the Neobrazilians, but it is said that in the old days it was prepared from the ash from burned green marajá palm leaves. 262 [263] [459]

Of fish, the Indian takes only as much as he can swallow at one gulp, picking it, with a rapid pinch of the fingers, from the common receptacle. In consequence, the piece of fish shortly assumes such a tattered appearance that it looks like nothing more than a dog's dinner. 264

When there is roast game, no one cuts himself a large piece, but each in turn seizes the meat, tears off a chunk with the teeth, and tosses the remainder back

2: Nimuendajú E-5 (1941-1942) 1948
SQ20 Tucuna SQ20

CULTURE

SUBSISTENCE ACTIVITIES

241 **Farming.**—The main *Tucuna* crops are bitter manioc, sweet manioc (macaxera), cara (*Dioscorea*), and maize. The last is planted with some ceremony. There are also at least three species of edible tubers which are not used by civilized people.

226 227 **Fishing and hunting.**—Fish, of great importance to the *Tucuna*, are taken with four- to nine-pronged javelins, arrows, harpoon arrows, baskets, weirs, traps, and a drug made of timbó. The Indians fish almost daily from childhood. On the Solimões, they are expert fishers of pirarucú, an important article of commerce.

224 177 411 Hunting today is unimportant, since game has been depleted to fill the demand for hides. The *Tucuna* now use firearms, but formerly employed the bow and arrow, spear, and blowgun. They also use pitfalls and several types of snares and traps. The blowgun, once the principal weapon, is disappearing.

222 262 [245] **Gathering.**—The wild burity, bacaba, patauá, and açahy palms are of great economic value. Some *Tucuna* plant Brazil nut trees near their houses. They eat certain frogs, Coleoptera larvae, and female red ants at hiving time. They like wild honey but keep no bees.

231 **Domesticated animals.**—The *Tucuna* raise a few chickens, but do not want hogs or other domestic animals because they dirty the premises. They keep young wild mammals and birds uncaged.

412 252 [177] [434] **Food preparation.**—Instead of a mortar, the *Tucuna* use a trough with a half-moon-shaped rocker of thick and heavy wood.

The making of manioc flour, introduced by the Neo-Brazilians, became one of the principal sources of income among the *Tucuna*.

HOUSES

342 The old houses had a small rectangular central portion with a short ridge pole mounted on props. Each end was semicircular, so that the ground plan was oval or nearly round. The walls were of a man's height, and were made of boards of paxiuba or of straw. The house could be sealed tight against mosquitoes. Families occupied the lateral corridors, the central space being reserved for ceremonies. All houses were spacious and well built.

177 342 352 513 The introduction of mosquito nets made house walls unnecessary. People slept on bunks along the walls, covered with mosquito nets, instead of in hammocks. Many houses were built without the semicircular extremities but with a longer central part, being like an open rectangular ranch house with a ridge pole. When the tribe occupied the flood plains of the shores and islands, they built houses on piles.

4: Marcoy T-5 (ca. 1865) 1875 SQ20 Tucuna SQ20

whose words I afterwards tried to express in musical notation, despairing ever to write them in syllables. 194

Like most of the river-tribes, these Ticunas understood the Tupi dialect, and spoke 191

[142
301
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TYPICAL PORTRAIT OF A TICUNA INDIAN.

it a little. Our men learned, from their inquiries as to our unexpected meeting at such an hour, that the natives had visited their plantation in order to gather the banana and yucca which they were then taking home. This store, providing sustenance for a week, assured them of passing the whole of this time in idleness, swinging in a ham- 222

4: Marcoy T-5 (ca. 1865) 1875 SQ20 Tucuna SQ20

mock. On parting we gave the man some fish-hooks and the woman a pair of scissors which had been notched by long use. This liberality procured from the pair a torrent of thanks from the depths of their throats, besides a present of part of the bananas they had gathered.

We stopped successively at several Ticuna huts, where, without other payment than a trifle gracefully presented to the proprietors, we ate, drank, slept, and collected musical pipes, drums, necklaces, bracelets, coronets, pompons, crests, and other baubles representing the wealth of the country, of which a Parisian bourgeois would have envied us the possession to decorate the walls of his villa at Asnières or Pantin.

The information we obtained on our journey concerning the manners and customs of the Ticunas is limited to the subjoined details. If we do not preface them with any notice of the antecedents of these natives, it is because the thread which connects their present with their past is too slight to sustain a dissertation.

The Ticuna nation, mention of whom occurs as far back as the seventeenth century, occupied, at the time when Pedro Teixeira ascended the river, the space on the left bank comprised between the rivers Ambiacu and Atacoari. On the north its territory was bounded by the Pehua and Yahua Indians; on the east by the Yuris of the river Içá; and on the west by the Orejones of the river Napo. These territorial limits remain still the same, only the numerical strength of the Ticunas is no longer commensurate with the extent of country they formerly occupied. Subjugated, re-subjugated, and catechised in turn by the Portuguese Carmelites and the Spanish Jesuits, who based on the pretensions of their government a claim to the legitimate control of the Ticunas and disputed for possession by force of arms, these natives, already much enfeebled by the contrary influence of the two forces acting upon them during half a century, were repeatedly decimated by the small-pox, that cholera-morbus of the red-skins, which completed the work of the *de Propaganda Fide*. All that now remains of the Ticuna nation forms a population of about one hundred and fifty individuals, all of whom live on the borders of the Atacoari and its two tributaries.[1]

A very odd custom of the Ticunas is the manner in which they receive individuals of another nation than their own. Hardly has such a visitor appeared on the threshold of their hut, than all the Ticunas who may be present seize their lances and present the point at the individual, under pretence of opposing his entrance. The visitor, who is aware that this is only etiquette, thrusts aside with his hand the weapons directed against him, enters the hut and seats himself on the nearest hammock. The majority of the Ticuna huts are provided, like the Brazilian drawing-rooms in the province of Para, with three or four hammocks slung opposite one another. When each hammock is made to swing by its occupant, either to chase the mosquitoes or to cool the air, and all swing together, passing, repassing, and apparently dodging, without ever coming into collision with each other, one might imagine oneself in a lace manufactory with the interminable motion of the bobbins before one's eyes.

The master of the hut then addresses the stranger, and in the hollow ventriloquial

[1] We speak of the Ticunas who are living wild, and not of those individuals of the same nation who have settled during the last twenty-five years in several of the villages on the Amazon.